



NEWS

Boise Teacher Wins \$8,500 Grant from the Qwest Foundation for Innovative Technology Project

Ten Teachers Statewide Receive \$90,000 in Grants

Boise, Jan. 27, 2011 – Science and math students at Boise High School will have access to a new mobile computer lab and an enhanced online tutoring and assessment program developed at the school with a grant won by their teacher and announced today.

The Boise winner, Heidi Pluska, is among ten statewide of the grants, which are funded by the Qwest Foundation and administered by the Idaho Department of Education.

Pluska won \$8,500 to create the mobile computer lab for math and science students and to extend to science students an online tutoring and assessment program Pluska and other teachers at Boise High had created for the math department.

"These teachers are a great example of how we can use technology in Idaho classrooms each and every day to engage students and raise academic achievement," Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. "I am pleased to continue to partner with Qwest to help bring these teachers' innovative ideas to life and better prepare students for the 21st century."

Qwest will provide a total of \$90,000 to the ten grant winners across Idaho this year, bringing the total over the seven years of the grant program to \$490,000. Superintendent Luna and Qwest Idaho President Jim Schmit will present Pluska with her award at the school on Thursday, January 27.

"We have been very impressed with the creativity and overall excellence of the grant proposals," Schmit said. "This is a great opportunity for Qwest to make a positive difference in the education of Idaho students and to help teachers improve their effectiveness in the classroom."

The grant program began after a statewide evaluation of technology in public schools in 2003 that found many Idaho teachers need support in integrating technology in the curriculum. A summary of all ten Idaho grant winners and their projects follows below.

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2011 Idaho Winners of Qwest Foundation for Education grants

Boise – Boise High School, Heidi Pluska, \$8,500 for mobile computer lab and expansion of online tutorial and assesment program.

Coeur d'Alene – Woodland Middle School, Dale Johnson, \$9,800 for equipment to allow students to make instructional videos about subjects they are studying in class.

Hazelton – Valley High School, Sam Franklin, \$8,900 for advanced graphing calculators to use in math and science classes.

Idaho Falls – Sunnyside Elementary, Michelle Ball, \$6,900 for iPads and accessories to allow students to create presentations on planets, constellations and other space topics.

Idaho Falls – Westside Elementary, Nicholette Johnson, \$8,900 for iPod Touches to create a mobile computer lab for 4th-graders to use for multiple subjects.

Jerome – Summit Elementary, Katie Cutler, \$8,300 for motion sensitive video games and dance programs to incorporate into physical education classes.

Moscow – Lena Whitmore and West Park Elementary, Luella Stark, \$9,600 for programmable LEGO robots to teach math, science and engineering at both schools.

Preston – Preston Junior High School, Melinda Harris, \$9,700 for iPads, iPod Touches and educational software to use in U.S. history classes.

Sugar City – Sugar-Salem High School, Marc Gee, \$10,000, for video production equipment to allow students to make instructional videos of nearby attractions.

Twin Falls – Xavier Charter School, Kim Kokx, \$9,500 to build a professional-grade recording studio.